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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

COUNTRY Germany (Russian Zone)

SUBJECT Volkssolidaritt

ORIGIN

25X1

25X1

SUPPLEMENT

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1. Volkssolidaritt, the SED-controlled welfare organization, operates to supplement the efforts of communal non-partisan groups in the Russian Zone. Conferences are, however, in progress between SMA officials and Volkssolidaritt functionaries which may lead to the organization's taking over the work of the Red Cross in the Russian Zone. Thus far, Volkssolidaritt has functioned with a minimum of organization or overhead: it serves merely to collect money for immediate disposal for its various projects. No capitalization or incorporation is contemplated.
2. Volkssolidaritt committees have been established in each commune, Kreis, and Land of the Eastern Zone. On these committees sit representatives of the three political parties, of the churches, of the FDGB, the FDJ, and the Frauenausschusse (Women's Committees). Leadership of the committees is not determined by election results, but falls to "the party or organization which displays the most interest and devotes the most time to Volkssolidaritt work."
3. The Central Committee of Volkssolidaritt, which is located in the Russian sector of Berlin, serves only to coordinate the activities of the Lnder committees. The secretaries of Volkssolidaritt in the five Lnder of the Russian Zone meet monthly in Berlin along with the members of the Central Committee. It is only at these meetings that binding directives are issued and policies are laid down. The Praesidium of the welfare organization, which is composed of representatives of the three parties, the FDGB, the FDJ, and the Frauenausschusse, is rather more representative in character.
4. The program of Volkssolidaritt is at the moment principally taken up with the transportation of city children to the country on recuperation visits, with the settlement of refugees from Eastern Germany in the Oderbruch region, and with aid to miners. It has also taken over the distribution of Swiss SOLI packages and is apparently negotiating with CARE for a similar distribution of that organization's packages. The aiding of homeless refugees from the East is another function which Volkssolidaritt performs in the reception centers in Frankfurt on the Oder and in Mecklenburg.

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CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENTIAL

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